



THE IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL OUTDOOR GAMES IN CHILDREN'S COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Play builds imagination and creativity in children. Play is essential to promote cognitive growth and healthy brain development of a child. Unstructured play helps develop a child's brain in a positive way. Through play, a child learns, solves problems, has fun and builds self-confidence. Play delivers long- and short-term emotional and behavioural benefits in children. Play can help reduce anxiety, stress and irritability in children, as well as increase happiness and self-esteem. Play improves literacy. Through play, children learn about communication. Concentration games develop the ability to observe and maintain focus. Research shows that tired or bored children pay more attention to their work after a play break. Play encourages greater independence as well as allows experimentation with creativity and innovative ideas. Children need intellectual as well as physical play. Play promotes physical fitness and makes children physically strong. Traditional outdoor games play an important role in children's cognitive and social development. Traditional outdoor games provide a unique and enriching way for children to interact with each other, developing their cognitive and social skills. But nowadays traditional outdoor games are unknown and not even played by children. The research paper discusses the importance and effects of play, especially traditional outdoor games, in children's cognitive and social development.

KEYWORDS: Cognitive Development, Social Development, Children.

INTRODUCTION

For children, playing is a natural and enjoyable way to stay active, healthy, and happy. From birth to adolescence, they need various unstructured play experiences to ensure their physical and mental well-being, as well as to develop life skills. Play is an essential part of a child's learning and development process. Through play, children can explore different kinds of activities that stimulate their senses, body, and mind. The connections formed through these experiences help them in their physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Giving children time and freedom to play without limitations also allows their imaginations to run wild, and lets them discover the world and understand themselves better.

Play is essential for promoting cognitive growth and healthy brain development in children. Unstructured play helps to build a child's brain in positive ways. Through play, children learn, solve problems, have fun, and increase their self-confidence. Play can also reduce anxiety, stress, and irritability in children, as well as increase their happiness and self-esteem. Additionally, play can help improve literacy by teaching communication skills and developing the ability to observe and maintain focus. Play promotes physical fitness, as well as greater independence, creativity, and innovative ideas. Traditional outdoor games are particularly important for children's cognitive and social development, yet they are often not played by children today.

Traditional outdoor games play an important role in children's cognitive and social development in many ways. They offer physical and mental exercise that increases problem-solving abilities, hand-eye coordination, and creativity. Outdoor games help promote social interaction among children, teach teamwork and collaboration, and can even strengthen community bonds. Traditional outdoor games are also a great opportunity for children to learn to take turns, respect rules, and understand competition. Additionally, children practicing these games learn to follow cues and control their emotions.

Traditional outdoor games increase physical fitness through running and hopping. They can also help children become more active and independent, as playing these games helps them build their boundaries and their confidence. Outdoor games are a wonderful way to build relationships between children and adults. Unfortunately, traditional outdoor games have been forgotten and are not played as often in recent times. This is due to a variety of factors such as busy lifestyles, technology-focused lives, increased screen time, and safety concerns. With more people living in cities, there can be less access to safe and open spaces for children to play. Additionally, with more activities available to children indoors, they may be less likely to go outside and engage in physical activity.

Another factor is cultural norms that have shifted towards a consideration of traditional outdoor games as being old-fashioned and outdated. Many children prefer to play video games or watch television rather than engage in traditional outdoor games. A lack of organized teams and groups also contributes to the decline of traditional outdoor games.

The major disadvantages of not playing traditional outdoor games include a lack of physical exercise and the potential for adverse effects on social development,

problem-solving skills, creativity, and hand-eye coordination. Additionally, a lack of outdoor games means that children may miss out on the opportunity to make friends and develop relationships through play. Furthermore, not playing outdoor games can lead to a decline in community involvement and spirit, as outdoor games can be a great way to bring people together. Additionally, traditional outdoor games are a great way for children to learn about the environment and develop an appreciation for nature. This can be beneficial in terms of encouraging children to appreciate and respect the natural world. Furthermore, outdoor games can introduce new experiences and skills that children may not otherwise gain. Finally, outdoor games can teach children about teamwork and collaboration, helping them build social skills. In India, traditional outdoor games include kho kho, lagori (seven stones), marbles, hide-and-seek, hopscotch, kabaddi and gilli danda. These outdoor activities are engaging and fun, while also helping children learn important cognitive and social skills.

Definition of Cognitive Development.

According to APA Dictionary of Psychology,

"Cognitive development is the growth and maturation of thinking processes of all kinds, including perceiving, remembering, concept formation, problem solving, imagining, and reasoning."

Hence it can be said that cognitive development is the growth and maturation of all kinds of thought processes in a child including understanding, remembering, concept formation, problem solving, imagination and reasoning.

It is essential to develop the ability to test, measure and monitor cognitive performance throughout the lifespan. Cognition plays an important role in maintaining long-term health and improving quality of life. Cognition is 'the mental act or process in the child's life of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience and the senses'. The ability to perceive surrounding objects and events, store and retrieve information, make decisions and respond appropriately is made possible only through cognitive development. We need cognition to understand information about the world around us and to safely interact with our environment.

Definition of Social Development.

We know that the success of society is related and dependent on the well-being of every citizen. Social development gives everyone the opportunity to grow, develop their own skills, achieve their desired goals, improve their quality of life and contribute to their families and communities in the most meaningful way possible. Social development emphasizes improving the well-being of every individual in society and creating an environment in which they can reach their full potential.

According to APA Dictionary of Psychology,

"social development is the gradual acquisition of certain skills (e.g., language, interpersonal skills), attitudes, relationships, and behavior that enable the individual to interact with others and to function as a member of society."

Children learn essential skills for study, work and relationships from outdoor games such as:

- **Self-esteem**

Children who excel in sports can develop strong self-esteem. Self-esteem is essential for a successful life. It is necessary to have a good opinion of our own character and abilities. Self-esteem affects a person's decision-making process, social relationships, emotional health, and overall well-being of a person. Also, it affects motivation because those with an optimistic outlook see their potential and are motivated to take on new challenges. Children participating in sports get a lot of encouragement when they perform well. For instance, when they score a goal or win a game they will receive praise from their coach, teammates, friends and parents.

- **Confidence**

Confidence is a skill that everyone needs in every walk of life. Children's development can benefit from and is influenced by confidence. Youngsters who have a positive sense of self-worth are happy of what they have accomplished and have more faith in their future success. They also experience higher degrees of acceptability from their peers and themselves. Overall, fostering children's confidence is crucial for their success at school, at home, in their social lives, and on the personal front. A child can develop their confidence best on outdoors playgrounds. It is necessary to have complete faith in everyone's competence, ideas, skills etc. Confidence in one's abilities and judgment enables one to express his knowledge and opinion freely without any difficulties. Self-confidence is the motivating factor that motivates entrepreneurs and leaders to do something. Self-confidence influences a person's success and failure attitudes.

- **Resilience**

Children who move around and engage in physical activity, play team sports, and consume a balanced diet grow cognitively and, as a result, are more mentally resilient.

- **Develops interpersonal relationships and social skills**

It can be said that outdoor games help in developing social skills and relationships with other people in children. Children gain and practise important social skills while playing with others, including taking turns, cooperating, adhering to rules, sharing, accepting and understanding diversity, and resolving conflict.

- **Helps children manage frustration and depression**

On playgrounds children have to be patient when working with others or trying something new and not feeling impatient, frustrated and disappointed even in failure. When playing with another person on the field, they learn how to deal with these negative experiences. Outdoor games can encourage children to effectively manage and overcome negative emotions. By participating in traditional outdoor sports, children develop skills such as interaction, independence, curiosity, coordination, balance, coping with challenging situations, etc.

CONCLUSION

Playing is an essential part of a child's learning and development process, helping them develop physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. It is essential for promoting cognitive growth and healthy brain development, as well as reducing anxiety, stress, and irritability. Traditional outdoor games are particularly important for children's cognitive and social development, yet they are often not played by children today due to busy lifestyles, technology-focused lives, increased screen time, and safety concerns. Cultural norms have shifted towards a consideration of traditional outdoor games as outdated, leading to a decline in physical activity, social development, problem-solving skills, creativity, and hand-eye coordination. Outdoor games are a great way for children to learn about the environment and develop an appreciation for nature, as well as introduce new experiences and skills. It is essential to develop the ability to test, measure and monitor cognitive performance throughout the lifespan, as cognition is essential for maintaining long-term health and improving quality of life. Social development is the gradual acquisition of certain skills that enable an individual to interact with others and function as a member of society. It is essential for a successful life, as it affects decision-making, social relationships, emotional health, and overall well-being. Sports can help children develop strong self-esteem and motivate them to take on new challenges. Fostering confidence is essential for children's success at school, at home, in their social lives, and on the personal front. Outdoor games can help develop social skills and relationships with other people, as well as skills such as Self-confidence, interaction, independence, curiosity, coordination, balance, and coping with challenging situations.

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